

"Must Treat Them Like Al Qaedas": FBI Chief On Drug Trafficking Organisations

Drug trafficking organisations must be treated the way foreign terrorist organisations were treated after the September 11, 2001, attacks, FBI Director Kash Patel said on Tuesday, pledging that the campaign against them will be a years-long mission.

"We must treat them like the al Qaedas of the world," Patel said at a Senate hearing, a day after President Donald Trump said the US military carried out a strike on a second Venezuelan boat in international waters.

Trump said three men were killed in the strike and that the boat was carrying drugs, although he provided no evidence for that assertion.

"The manhunt after 9/11 took some years and this is going to be a years-long mission," Patel said.

The Trump administration also has provided scant information about a similar strike on September 2, despite demands from members of Congress that the government justify the action. It has alleged those onboard were members of Venezuelan gang Tren de Aragua and said 11 people were killed.

The Venezuelan government has said none of the people killed in the first strike belonged to Tren de Aragua.

The decision to blow up suspected drug vessels instead of seizing them and apprehending their crews is unusual and evokes memories of the US fight against militant groups like al Qaeda.

Critics said the action in international waters was the latest example of Trump testing the limit of the law as he expands the scope of presidential power. The US Constitution requires that Congress, not the president, must declare war.

Patel's comments echoed recent remarks from US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth, as the administration has sought to explain why it has made major deployments to the southern Caribbean for an anti-narcotics mission.

"A foreign terrorist organisation poisoning your people with drugs coming from a drug cartel is no different than al Qaeda, and they will be treated as such," Hegseth said earlier this month.

"Wanted To Distract": Man Who Falsely Claimed He Shot Charlie Kirk

WASHINGTON: The 71-year-old man who approached the cops immediately after Charlie Kirk was killed and yelled, "I shot him, now shoot me", told investigators that he was trying to "draw attention from the real shooter", according to a report.

George Zinn, a known "gadfly" who was led away from Utah Valley University in handcuffs after the assassination last Wednesday, told cops that he was trying to distract them from the real assassin, Tyler Robinson. During an interrogation, Zinn admitted he did not kill Kirk, but said he wanted to cause a distraction "to draw attention from the real shooter". He made several comments after being taken to a local hospital due to a medical condition - saying he "wanted to be a martyr for the person who was shot," court papers stated, according to a report. He is now being charged with obstruction of justice, which is a second-degree felony. Zinn is a known political "gadfly" who frequently pops up at events and is nearly always tossed out, with numerous trespassing arrests at events like film festivals, protests and political rallies.

"Almost every political event you can think of, there was always George somewhere in the background, listening," Salt Lake County District Attorney Sim Gill said.

"He's a person who can be odd, and has those kinds of sometimes odd behavior challenges," said Gill, who has prosecuted Zinn several times. "But by and large, he's more of a gadfly than anything else." In 2013, Zinn threatened to bomb the Salt Lake City Marathon and spent a year in the can for that incident, according to reports.

Thousands Of Palestinians Flee As Israeli Troops Press Forward Into Gaza City



JERUSALEM: Israeli troops and tanks were pushing deeper into Gaza City on Wednesday, the second day of a ground offensive that was widely condemned internationally, as Palestinians fled the devastated area en masse.

Israel's military said that air force and artillery units had struck the city over 150 times in the last few days, ahead of ground troops moving in. The strikes have toppled high-rise towers in areas densely populated by tent camps where thousands of Palestinians are sheltering. Israel claims the towers are being used by Hamas to surveil troops.

Overnight strikes killed at least 16 people, including women and children, hospital officials reported. The death count in Gaza is nearing 65,000 Palestinians since the war began Oct. 7, 2023, with a Hamas-led attack on Israel, according to health officials in the enclave.

Meanwhile, Palestinians

streamed out of the city - some by car, others on foot. Israel opened another corridor south of Gaza City for two days beginning Wednesday to allow more people to evacuate.

More than half of the Palestinians killed in overnight Israeli strikes were in famine-stricken Gaza City, including a child and his mother who died in their apartment in the Shati refugee camp, according to officials from Shifa Hospital, which received the casualties.

In central Gaza, Al-Awda Hospital said an Israeli strike hit a house in the urban Nuseirat refugee camp, killing three, including a pregnant woman. Two parents and their child were also killed when a strike hit their tent in the Muwasi area west of the city of Khan Younis, said officials from Nasser Hospital, where the bodies were brought. The Gaza Health Ministry, meanwhile, said that multiple Israeli strikes hit the

Rantisi Hospital for children in Gaza City on Tuesday night.

It posted pictures on Facebook showing the damaged roof, water tanks and rubble in a hospital hallway.

The ministry, which is part of the Hamas-run government, said the strikes forced half of some 80 patients to flee the facility. About 40 patients, including four children in intensive care and eight premature babies, remained in the hospital with 30 medical workers, the ministry said.

The Israeli military said it was looking into the strikes, but in the past it has accused Hamas of building military infrastructure inside civilian areas. The military's Arabic-language spokesman, Col. Avichay Adraee, wrote on social media that a new route opened for those heading south for two days starting at noon Wednesday.

But many Palestinians in the north were cut off from the outside world. The Palestinian Telecommunications Regulatory Authority, based in the occupied West Bank, said Israeli strikes on the main network lines in northern Gaza had collapsed internet and telephone services on Wednesday morning. The Associated Press tried unsuccessfully to reach many people in Gaza City.

What Elon Musk Said To INOX's Siddharth Jain On Purchase Of 1st Tesla

Billionaire Elon Musk has congratulated Siddharth Jain, Executive Director of the INOX Group, following his recent purchase of a Tesla.

"Congrats!" wrote Mr Musk on the social media platform X. Mr Jain on Monday took delivery of what he called "India Inc's first Tesla." Sharing the news, he posted a photo of his Tesla Model Y in stealth grey and dedicated it to Tesla CEO Elon Musk, saying, "This one's for you, Elon Musk." Mr Jain said that this has been a long-awaited moment for him ever since he visited Tesla's factory in Fremont, California, 2017. "I have been waiting for this precious moment ever since I visited the Tesla Fremont factory in 2017! Dreams do come true!" he wrote. Tesla India Launch The US electric car company officially launched in India in mid-July. The first showroom was opened at the Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) in Mumbai. A few weeks later, it opened another showroom at Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi. Tesla India's official account on X announced on September 4 that car deliveries would start soon in Mumbai, Delhi, Pune, and Gurugram. Tesla Model Y is a fully electric compact SUV. It can seat up to 7 people with an optional third row. Like other Teslas, it has fast acceleration, smooth handling, and can go long distances on a single charge.

King Charles III To Welcome Trump With State Banquet, Carriage Ride At Windsor Castle

It's the sort of experience you just can't buy.

The carriages are being polished, the family silver is being laid out, and diamonds are being dusted off as King Charles III prepares to offer a royal welcome to Donald Trump on Wednesday for what will be the highlight of the US president's unprecedented second state visit to Britain.

Hundreds of soldiers, gardeners and chefs are putting the finishing touches on their preparations to make sure the president and first lady Melania Trump get the full royal treatment. But it's a spectacle with a purpose: to bolster ties with a world leader known for a love of bling at a time when his America First policies are putting pressure on trade and security arrangements globally. Trump said Tuesday after arriving in London that he loved being back in the United Kingdom, calling it a "very special place." Asked if he had a message for Charles, he said the king was a long-time friend of his and well-respected.

The backdrop for day one will be Windsor Castle, an almost 1,000-year-old royal residence with gilded interiors, crenelated towers and priceless artworks.

It's a scene that has seemed to enchant Trump, who ditched his trademark bluster and described the



invitation to Windsor as "a great, great honor."

"I think that also is why he seems so visibly excited about the second meeting, because it isn't an invitation given to (just) anyone," said George Gross, an expert on the British monarchy at King's College London.

The second leg of the visit will take place on Thursday, when Trump and British Prime Minister Keir Starmer meet at Chequers, the 16th-century redbrick mansion in the Chiltern Hills northwest of London that serves as the official country estate of British prime ministers.

The government hopes a technology deal to be signed during the trip will underline the trans-Atlantic bond remains strong despite differences over Ukraine, the Middle East and the future of NATO. While Britain's royals long ago gave up real political power, their history, tradition and celebrity give them a cachet that means presidents and prime ministers covet an invitation to join them. That makes the invi-

tations, handed out at the request of the elected government, a powerful tool to reward friends and wring concessions out of reluctant allies. No US president, or any other world leader, has ever had the honor of a second UK state visit. That won't be lost on a president who often describes his actions with superlatives and has made no secret of his fondness for the British royals.

The day will begin when the king and Queen Camilla formally welcome the Trumps to Windsor Castle. That will be followed by a horse-drawn carriage ride through the estate - 6,400 hectares (15,800 acres) of farms, forest and open space that includes a one-time royal hunting ground which is still home to 500 red deer.

Back at the castle, a military band will play "God Save the King" and "The Star-Spangled Banner" before Trump and the king inspect an honor guard of soldiers in traditional scarlet tunics and tall bearskin hats.

University of California Sues Trump Administration Over Funding Freeze

WASHINGTON: Labor unions, faculty and students in the University of California education system sued President Donald Trump's administration on Tuesday over the freezing of federal funds and other actions that they say aim to stifle academic freedom.

The lawsuit, filed in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, seeks to forbid the government from using financial threats against the system that it said were harmful and unlawful. It also aims to restore funding already suspended.

"(The administration) has attempted to implement a playbook to threaten colleges and universities," the coalition that filed the lawsuit said. It added that those threats were based on disdain for the institutions' curriculum, expressive activity on campuses, and initiatives for diversity, equity and inclusion.

The University of California system and the White House had no immediate comment on the lawsuit.

The government has



launched probes into universities' handling of alleged antisemitism during student protests against Israel's assault on Gaza, and has frozen funds over that and other issues, including climate initiatives and DEI programs.

Civil rights advocates say the Trump administration is attempting to make universities more aligned with his political agenda, while critics also see such attempts as threatening free speech and academic freedom.

The University of California operates one of the largest higher-education systems in the country, with 10 main campuses and nearly 300,000 students, as well as 265,000 faculty and staff.

The Trump administration

had proposed to settle its probe into the University of California, Los Angeles - part of the university system - through a \$1 billion payment from the institution. Democratic California Governor Gavin Newsom called that an extortion attempt.

UCLA said in August the government froze \$584 million in funding before a judge ordered the Trump administration to restore some of that money. The University of California, Berkeley, another campus in the system, said on Friday it provided information on 160 faculty members and students to the government as part of an investigation.

University of California President James Miliken

said on Monday the institution was facing one of the gravest threats in its history due to the federal government's actions, noting that it receives more than \$17 billion each year in federal support.

The Trump administration has faced some legal roadblocks in its funding freeze attempts. A federal judge ruled earlier this month that it had unlawfully terminated more than \$2 billion in grants for Harvard University.

The government alleges universities allowed antisemitism during campus protests.

Protesters, including some Jewish groups, have said the government is wrongly equating their criticism of Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories with antisemitism, and their advocacy for Palestinian rights with support for extremism.

Human rights advocates have noted a rise in antisemitism, anti-Arab bias and Islamophobia due to conflict in the Middle East, although the Trump administration has not announced probes into Islamophobia.

Khalistani Outfit Announces Siege On Indian Consulate In Vancouver

OTTAWA: As India and Canada resume diplomatic ties, Sikhs for Justice (SFJ), a US-based Khalistani outfit, has threatened to "siege" the Indian Consulate in Vancouver. The pro-Khalistan group said it will take over the Indian consulate on Thursday and asked Indo-Canadians, planning a routine visit to the consulate, to choose another date.



They also released a poster showing the new Indian High Commissioner, Dinish Patnaik, with a target on his face. In a statement, the group accused Indian consulates of running a spy network and surveillance targeting Khalistanis.

"Two years ago -- 18 September 2023 -- Prime Minister Justin Trudeau told Parliament that the Indian agents' role was under investigation in the assassination of Hardeep Singh Nijjar," the statement said.

"Two years on, Indian Consulates continue to run a spy network and surveillance targeting Khalistan Referendum campaigners," it added.

The group alleged that the threat to them "was so grave" that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) had to offer "witness protection" to Inderjeet Singh Gosal, who assumed leadership of the Khalistan Referendum campaign after Nijjar's death.

SFF claimed that through the "siege", the

group will demand "accountability" for so-called "espionage and intimidation on Canadian soil."

There was no immediate comment from the Ministry of External Affairs in India or the Indian Consulate in Vancouver at the time of filing this report.

Khalistani Extremism in Canada

Earlier this month, the Canadian government, in an internal report, acknowledged that extremist Khalistani groups were receiving financial support from individuals and networks based in Canada.

These groups include Babbar Khalsa International and the International SYF, both of which are listed as terrorist organisations under Canada's Criminal Code. The report noted that now these extremist groups mostly operate through smaller groups of individuals who support the Khalistan cause without being tied to any specific organisation.

All You Need To Know About TikTok, Its Algorithm, And US-China Deal

A central question to TikTok's potential shutdown saga has been whether the popular social video platform would keep its algorithm - the secret sauce that powers its addictive video feed - after it's divested from Chinese parent company ByteDance.

Now, it appears that it can. Wang Jingtao, deputy director of China's Central Cyberspace Affairs Commission, told reporters in Madrid Monday there was consensus on authorisation of "the use of intellectual property rights such as (TikTok's) algorithm" - a main sticking point in the deal.

The sides also agreed on entrusting a partner with handling U.S. user data and content security, he said. But while China has agreed that a divested TikTok could use its algorithm, it's uncertain how that would work.

Little is known about the actual deal in the works, including what companies are involved and whether the United States would have a stake in TikTok. Li Chenggang, China's international trade representative, said the two sides have reached "basic framework consensus" to properly solve TikTok-related issues in a cooperative way, reduce investment barriers and pro-

mote related economic and trade cooperation. The sides now have until December 16 to hash out the details, following the latest deadline extension by the Trump administration.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said in a press conference this week after the latest round of trade talks between the world's top two economies concluded in Madrid that U.S. President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping would speak Friday to possibly finalise the deal. He said the objective of the deal would be to switch to American ownership.

He did not disclose the terms of the deal, saying that it is between two private parties, but added that "the commercial terms have been agreed upon."

Oracle Corp. has been floated as a likely buyer for the platform. Representatives for the company did not immediately respond to a message for comment on Monday and Tuesday.

In Madrid, U.S. Trade Representative Jamieson Greer said the team was "very focused on TikTok and making sure that it was a deal that is fair for the Chinese," but also "completely respects U.S. national security concerns."

"We Have A Deal On TikTok, Will Speak To Xi Jinping": Trump



WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump on Monday said that the US finally has a deal with Chinese app TikTok.

Trump, while talking to reporters ahead of his UK visit, said that he will speak to Chinese President Xi Jinping.

"We have a deal on TikTok. I've reached a deal with China. I'm going to speak to President Xi on Friday to confirm everything up," he said.

A deal has been reached between the Trump administration and China to keep TikTok operational in the United States, administration officials

announced on Monday, concluding a years-long effort that began during Trump's first term, CNN reported.

US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said that a framework agreement has been reached, and Trump will speak with Chinese leader Xi Jinping Friday to finalise the deal. The agreement and conversation is a precursor to a Trump-Xi meeting that both sides have sought for months, US officials said Monday after a framework plan was announced.

"President Trump played a role in this, we had a call with him last

night, we had specific guidance from him we shared it with our Chinese counterparts," Bessent said in Madrid on Monday. "Without his leadership and the leverage he provides, we would not have been able to include the deal today," as quoted by CNN.

TikTok briefly went dark in the United States on January 18, the day before the Foreign Adversary Controlled Applications Act went into effect. But on January 19, one day before Trump took office for his second term, he said he would sign an executive action upon the beginning of his term that would ensure US companies would not be punished for hosting TikTok on their app stores or servers.

The executive order, signed on January 20, delayed for 75 days the enforcement of the law. Trump extended the deadline again in June. The deadline had most recently been extended to September 17, but Trump was widely expected to move the deadline again if a deal didn't come together in time, CNN reported.

Main Suspect in Madeleine McCann Case, Christian Brueckner, Set for Release

The main suspect in the 2007 disappearance of British toddler Madeleine McCann is due to be released on Wednesday from the German prison where he has been serving a seven-year prison sentence for an unrelated sex crime.

German prosecutors first named Christian Brueckner a suspect in 2020, when he was already serving the sentence for raping a 72-year-old woman in part of Portugal's Algarve region where McCann went missing.

His prison term ends on Wednesday. Der Spiegel said his passport had been cancelled, he will be electronically tagged, must declare a place of residence and cannot leave without permission.

"This is an attempt by prosecutors to keep him in a kind of investigative detention where they have access to him at all times," Der Spiegel quoted lawyer Philipp Marquort as saying.

Brueckner's lawyer denies any connection with the McCann case. Brueckner has convictions for child abuse and drug trafficking in addition to

the rape of the woman, who has since died.

Police in Britain, Germany and Portugal, who have identified Brueckner as their main suspect, have long sought evidence to link him conclusively to the case. Portuguese and German police spent four days digging for evidence in the Algarve in June.

British police said on Monday Brueckner, who is detained in a prison in Sehnde in northern Germany, declined their request for an interview in connection with the disappearance. They said they would continue to pursue any viable lines of enquiry.

McCann, then aged three, disappeared from her bedroom in a holiday resort as her parents dined metres away.

Brueckner, 49, lived in the Algarve between 1995 and 2007, where, according to court documents seen by Reuters he burgled hotels and holiday flats.

McCann's parents continue to campaign for their daughter, who would now be 22, to be found and issue a statement each year on the anniversary of her disappearance.